

C. Remarks

The claims are 1-6 and 20, with claims 1 and 20 being independent. Claims 7-18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. No new matter has been added.

Initially, as a formal matter, Applicant has noted that the Examiner did not initial and return PTO-1449 form, which was filed on October 13, 2005 with an Information Disclosure Statement. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to consider the information provided via the IDS and return the initialed PTO-1449 form, confirming such consideration.

The Office Action entered the rejection of 7-18 continue under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,200,431 B1 (Sone). Since claims 7-18 have been cancelled, this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance. In particular, it is Applicant's current intention to file a divisional application, to pursue the subject matter of the rejected claims.

The only claims remaining in this application are claim 1-6 and 20, which have been allowed. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the present case be passed to issue.

This Amendment should be entered, because it fully complies with the requirements set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. No new search or consideration is required.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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